



University Ready

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Background and context

University Ready is a collaborative project designed to help students in Wales with their next steps into higher education (HE). During the pandemic, the Welsh Government identified that learners would benefit from additional support with the transition into HE and approached universities in Wales to help address this. The result was a collection of resources from all Wales' universities hosted via OpenLearn - The Open University's free learning platform.

A steering group was set up to oversee the development of this project consisting of representatives from: Welsh Government, HEFCW (now Medr), NUS Wales, Universities Wales, Careers Wales, Regional Education Schools Consortia, an FE college representative, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, OpenLearn and The Open University in Wales.

The University Ready collection

Launched in May 2021, the [University Ready](#) hub includes resources that are free for anyone to use, available in Welsh and English.

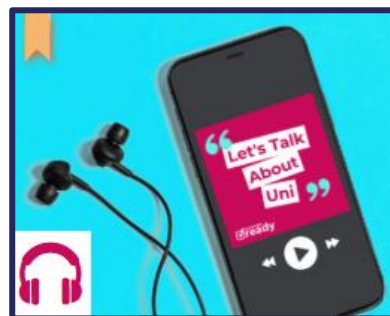
Resources include articles, videos, interactives and podcasts and address the following themes: Application process, student life, money advice, study skills, studying in Welsh, wellbeing and mental health support, additional support, as well as content for parents and guardians.



Initially the project used existing resources produced by the HE institutions (HEIs), but when the project was extended by a further three years, the project shifted to a more active collaborative approach. A working group was formed, including a representative from each HEI in Wales: Aberystwyth University, Bangor University, Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University, The Open University in Wales, University of South Wales, Swansea University, University of Wales Trinity St David and Wrexham University. New content was produced from this collaborative approach – with all HEIs involved in identifying resources needed, planning, development and promotion of the resources.

One content highlight is a bilingual podcast series featuring student voices and experiences from all of Wales' universities. *Let's Talk about Uni* offers peer-to-peer advice and relatable experiences for any learners considering university and common barriers or worries they might have. Each episode addresses a specific barrier:

- Is university right for me?
- How do I get through the application process?
- Will I fit in at university?
- Can I afford to go to university?
- Can I make the leap to higher academic study?



The interactive parent guide offers advice for any parent or guardian supporting a young person through the university application process and beyond. This was developed by adapting and expanding a range of existing parent-facing resources, including a workshop that the University of South Wales was delivering to parents and guardians.

The project has most recently produced a step-by-step interactive guide taking learners through the university application process with practical advice and tips.

Focus group research conducted for the project found that learners valued neutral guidance, particularly at the start of their university research. Accordingly, these resources do not promote a particular institution; like all the collaborative resources, they are neutral and promote the benefits of the university experience in general.

Impact and next steps

The University Ready site has received 250,000 visitors since its launch in May 2021.

A valuable outcome of the University Ready project is that all universities in Wales are coming together to support learners and encourage HE participation. It has enabled the production of resources that would not have been developed without this collaborative mindset and pooling of funding. All partners are still actively participating in the project.

Focus group research undertaken in Spring 2024 indicated that learners do need this support covering the application process and transition to HE study.

For promotion, a suite of promotional assets were developed for partners to share, schools consortia sessions were delivered, as well as paid social and Google advertising campaigns.

The project will be fully evaluated in Spring 2026 with recommendations made to Medr as to how the work could be continued, enhanced and linked to other initiatives.

Collaborating universities

Aberystwyth University

Bangor University

Cardiff University

Cardiff Metropolitan University

The Open University in Wales

University of South Wales

Swansea University

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Wrexham University

This case study has been produced and shared as part of the Medr-funded QAA Cymru project: Enabling learner progression into and within higher education.

Find out more about the project on the QAA Cymru [website](#).

